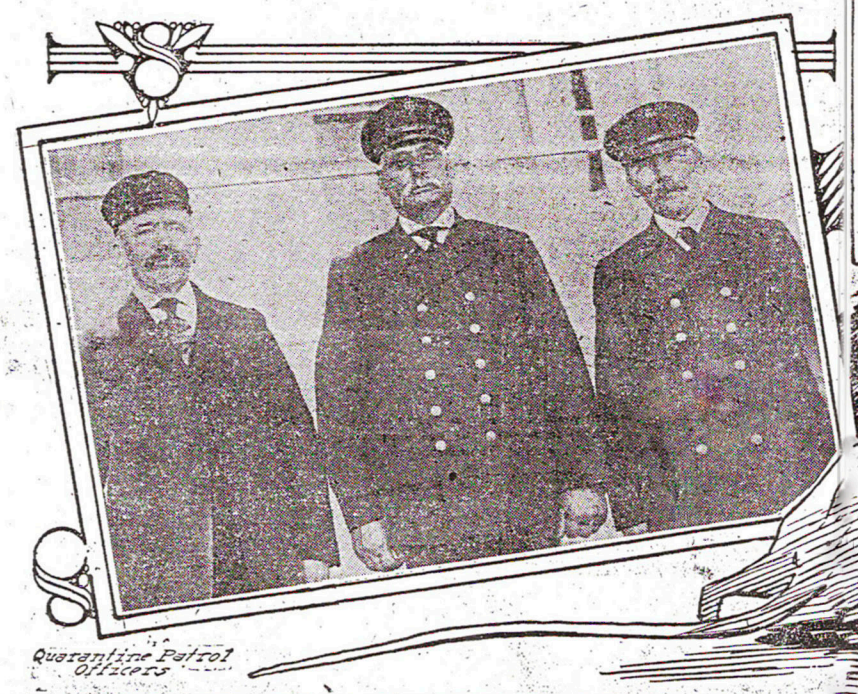
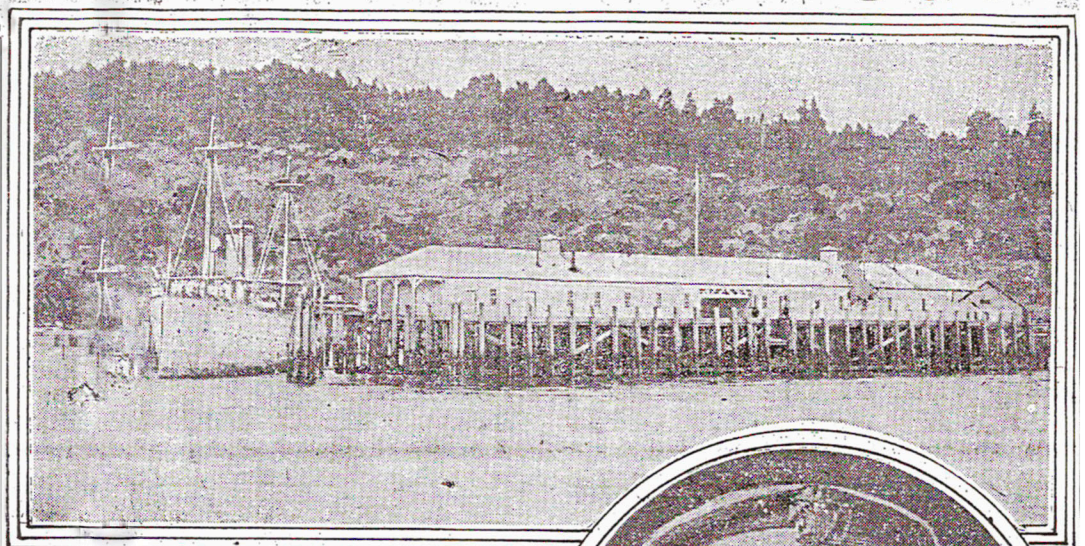
Quarantine Guards Port From Disease

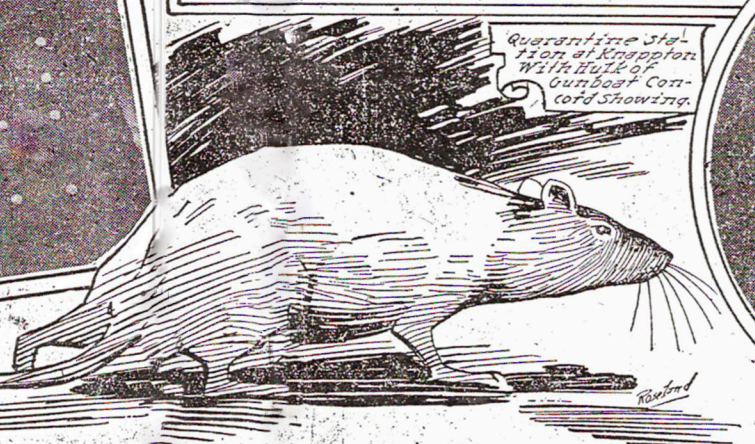
Ships and Aliens Must Pass Muster as Fit Before Entering Columbia.



Quarantine Patrol Officers

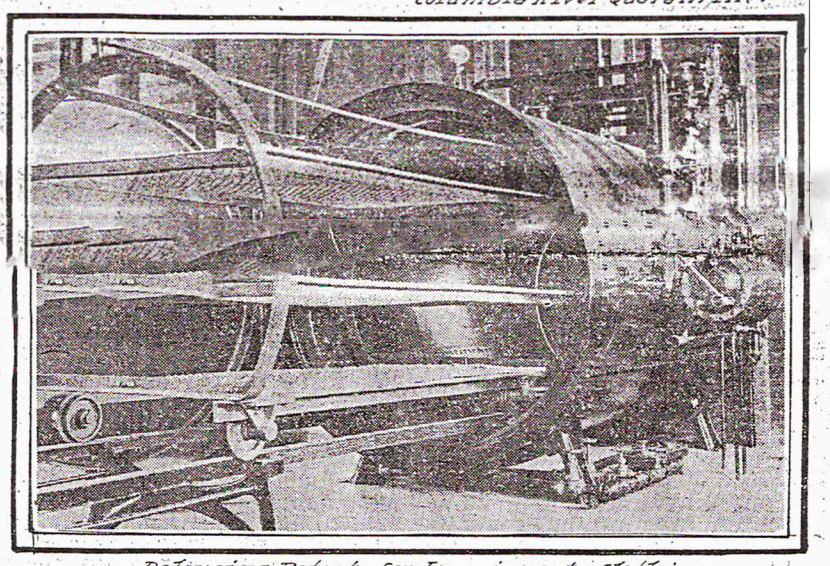


Quarantine station at Knappton With hulk of gunboat Concord showing.



Dr. Jay Tuttle in Charge of Columbia River Quarantine.

Sulphur Pots for Fumigating.



Delousing Retorts for Immigrants' Clothing.

BY DeWITT HARRY.

PRATIQUE is granted foreign vessels entering the Columbia river at Astoria, which ranks as one of the main points of entry and clearance for offshore traffic in America. The Columbia river quarantine station functions as do similar safeguards at ports of call, but owing to its relatively long distance from Portland, few here realize that at the mouth of the Columbia exists such an institution. Before any vessel coming from a foreign port can discharge or load cargo in the Columbia river it must pass quarantine at Astoria.

The "Ellis island" for this district is situated on the Washington side of the river, near Knappton, and consists of a dock, disinfecting building and appliances, quarters, hospital, detention quarters, etc., and is in charge of Dr. Jay Tuttle, acting assistant surgeon. This station is fully equipped to care for immigrants and for the fumigation of incoming vessels. Before undertaking their voyage to foreign ports outgoing ships are given clearance. It is one of the safeguards thrown out by the federal government to guard against the entry of disease into the country.

Fleas Carry Disease.

Constant vigilance is necessary on the part of the quarantine officials and their assistants. The main danger so far as this port is concerned is from fleas. These fleas have been found from past experience to be plague carriers and live on the rats that infest the holds of vessels. In trading with the orient close watch must be kept to prevent the entry of these disease-spreading rodents and their parasites.

Dr. Tuttle may be likened to a rat catcher, for that is his main business —the extermination of rodents. Every possible precaution is taken to see that these disease carriers do not enter the cities in his area.

The story of the dangerous flea as related by Dr. Tuttle is rather out of the ordinary. The plague is not generally infectious. It spreads by contact. Fleas infest the clothing of persons afflicted with the plague and in their search for food they drink the blood of the diseased persons. The flea is then a disease carrier, goes from the human to the rat and with the rat aboard ship and thence to other countries.

Plagues Terrorize Seaports.

Ocean ports on our seaboard have often been victims of the activities of the oriental flea and the uniform history has been that where it once gets a foothold it is extremely difficult of annihilation. Thanks to the vigilance of the quarantine on the Columbia river our cities have yet to experience the plague. In other words, our rat catchers have proven efficient, working on the theory that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

But the plague, while the more dangerous and most dreaded of communicable diseases, is not the only danger with which the port doctors are confronted. It is their duty to watch over the immigrant—to inspect his person to see that he comes up to the standards of bodily health set by the national immigration authorities, and to exterminate all body vermin. With ships to inspect and the crews for possible infection or contagious ailments the passengers and the shipments even on the vessels themselves the task set is extensive.

Government Station Started.

Up to 1889 quarantine at the mouth of the Columbia river was conducted under state control by a health officer appointed by the governor and stationed at Astoria. Early in 1889 the federal government purchased the present location across from Astoria and the buildings of the station were erected under the supervision of Dr. Hill Hastings, assistant surgeon, United States marine hospital service. Even at this time, over 40 years ago, Dr. Tuttle was connected with the hospital, being at the call of the collector of customs who then had charge. In 1892 Dr. Tuttle was appointed acting assisting surgeon and later given full charge of the station and the marine hospital when the collector of customs was relieved of the duties.

On the establishment of the quarantine in 1880 at the mouth of the Columbia the business office was located at Astoria, where it has remained ever since. The steamer Electro was the first boarding vessel, serving until July, 1913, when the gasoline launch Hulda was chartered for that purpose. Since its inception the officers in charge of the Columbia river quarantine have been Hill Hastings, Baylis H. Earle, Frank McKeon, John M. Holt, Jay Tuttle, temporary; Harvey G. Ebert, and Jay Tuttle, the latter since October, 1917.

Delays Are Prevented.

The greatest care is given here to expediting the inspection of vessels, especially on entering the harbor, so that they may be granted pratique and proceed up the river to Portland. By means of their wireless ships off the mouth of the river generally notify quarantine officials of the probable time of arrival so that they may be prepared. The American admiralty laws provide that it is not necessary for a quarantine officer to board a ship between sunrise and sunset, so that if a vessel arrives at the quarantine grounds during the hours of darkness the doctors are not forced to inspect her. However, the service at Astoria has proven extremely resilient in this matter and few vessels are detained, no matter what the hour of their arrival.

The recent enormous increase in offshore traffic for the Columbia river has served to accentuate the value of the services rendered by this station, until now it is taking rank among the first ten in the United States. Though it is not generally realized, many immigrants arrive at the mouth of the Columbia by means of foreign ships and have to be inspected there by both the quarantine and immigration officials before being permitted to land. On all of his boarding trips Dr. Tuttle is accompanied by an official of the United States immigration service, the two departments working hand in hand.

Ships Held Until Cleared.

The Knappton station is located about six miles across the river from Astoria. There are two quarantine grounds where ships are held until given clearance. One of these mooring places is near the station and the other is at Tongue point, where the new naval base is to be constructed. Ships entering or leaving the harbor must anchor here under quarantine flag until released. Incoming vessels from many foreign ports must be fumigated. Where it is possible they are fumigated at Astoria, but an official of the service also is on duty in Portland to receive those given provisional pratique to proceed this far.

At the quarantine station there is full equipment for fumigating ships, bathing and inspecting immigrants and cleansing their clothing. Immense super-heated machines receive the clothing of aliens entering the country, wherein the vermin are exterminated by the application of dry heat. Overseas veterans who are familiar with delousing plants at repatriation and embarkation points can see a duplicate of this equipment at Knappton.

Immigrants enter the quarters, disrobe, and while bathing their clothing is deloused and all of their belongings are put through the heating drums. Before receiving their cleansed garments they pass before a staff of doctors and any who are found infected or below the physical standard set are placed in detention quarters aboard the hulk of the former gunboat Concord and held to await deportation. The Concord in 1898 was one of the proudest ships in the navy and performed valiant services for America with Dewey at the battle of Manila bay.

Fumes Kill Infected Rodents.

Vessels detained for fumigation at Astoria can be taken to the station and have the vapor so deadly to rats and vermin pumped into their holds from retorts located on the docks. Most of the fumigation is done, however, by means of sulphur which is burned in huge pots placed in the vessels' holds. Quarantine officials take these pots aboard ships, place them advantageously so there will be no danger from spreading fire, light the sulphur and then batten down the hatches so as to retain all of the fumes possible within the ship. The sulphur pots are placed in tubs of water, the heat evaporating the water and the moisture aiding materially in getting dense fumes. This spells almost certain destruction for all the rodents and other animal life aboard.

Several sets of these fumigation pots are kept in Portland and when vessel is given provisional pratique to proceed here and discharge cargo the pots are put aboard and the fumigating done. This arrival under the auspices of the quarantine officials working under orders from Astoria. This fumigation is usually done while the vessel lies in the stream clear of the docks and is mandatory even when foreign vessels have been fumigated that they also rat guards on all their moorings answers to guard against any such rodents passing safely to them. These quarantine officials and the arrival from Asiatic are usually done of from moored even done while them and and foreign be fumigation provisions for the rat fenders on the ers, nets and other guards in place maintained and gang planks and boarding planks watched when prevent the rodent passengers from getting ashore. In cases where cargo might be injured the fumigation provisional pratique provides for its discharge upon the earliest possible precautions to prevent any violation of quarantine regulations. On a vessel's arrival in Port the preparations for fumigation has been made and it proceeds as rapidly as possible so as to prevent delay. Upon completion of fumigation certificate is given the master as soon as he is allowed to proceed with the regular course of his business.

Regulations Severe.

A copy of the quarantine regulations is given to every master and he must report on arrival at each of its provisional hospital stations. On a vessel's moored a certain distance away from the dock and fitted with the rat guards, the fumigation to the rat fenders on the ers, nets and other guards in place maintained and gang planks and boarding planks watched when prevent the rodent passengers from getting ashore. In cases where cargo might be injured the fumigation provisional pratique provides for its discharge upon the earliest possible precautions to prevent any violation of quarantine regulations. On a vessel's arrival in Port the preparations for fumigation has been made and it proceeds as rapidly as possible so as to prevent delay. Upon completion of fumigation certificate is given the master as soon as he is allowed to proceed with the regular course of his business.

Two decades of experience have made the Columbia river quarantine into a smooth working machine far superior to that in operation on Puget sound, and to date even more efficient in that the record for more port is clear, showing no epidemics. The importance of this work cannot be overestimated. Its value in safeguarding the health of the country communities that line the Pacific coast is being realized more and more as the foreign traffic increases. Each ship entering the river from foreign seaports, the west coast of South America and Canada and those ships from the Orient and Europe that have not yet been at an American port must be boarded and inspected at Astoria, and if there is any danger of infection fumigated.

Health Clinic Necessary.

Special warfare are issued from time to time by the United States public health service regarding certain foreign ports and in case a vessel should arrive from one of these places extraordinary precautions are taken. Vessels plying between coastwise traffic or plying between American ports are boarded only by customs officials, who also board all other ships passing the mouth of the river. Each ship must carry also a health and every master must make complete report of conditions on arrival as to call to the quarantine station. On receipt of this bill of health Dr. Tuttle forms his opinion as to whether fumigation is necessary or not. If the ship is cleared and after fumigation clean it is cleared and admitted free pratique. After inspection by the health officers the customs officials, lists, lists from foreign governments, the manifest, the cargo and then the list of stowers and crew. These various stations of the different departments dovetail closely and they co-operate as far as possible. The boarding officials meet the ships far down the harbor, clamber up the side with rope ladders and are making the inspections while the ship is yet under way. With the cessation of traffic, the public health service has much money in maintaining the Columbia river station, which would need little inspection work, but during the last two years this mm of this course has been attended by hified during the quarantine officials have been forced to work at top speed to handle the great increase in shipping.

Many strange vessels pass through their hands. Some of them are magnificent examples of the builder's art, well kept up and maintained, their crews well disciplined, healthy and efficient, their officers spotless housekeepers and the entire vessel radiating confidence—in short, a welcome ship to any port. Other ships present a far different aspect—dirty, odoriferous, the crews clothed in filthy garments, the holds rat-infested. On one such ship recently arriving in Astoria Dr. Tuttle estimated that he killed fully 200 rats. This was an extremely wicked vessel to have in any port, as the quarantine officers were certain that many of the rats were infected and great danger existed for anyone with an abraded skin who came in contact with one of the rodents.

Many American cities that have experienced epidemics of the plague or other loathsome diseases are adopting elaborate safeguards to prevent the spread of rats. Some sections of certain seaports are even being encircled by ratproof walls. During the recent high water Portland received a futile lesson of the possibilities of rats infesting a city when the rising river drove them from their homes under the docks and into the business sections of the city many blocks away. At this time the services of the predatory animal extermination bureau were used to good advantage, the professional rat hunters slaughtering thousands of the rodents by means of poison and traps.

Fever Danger Non-Existent.

Ports in the southern portion of the United States have a more complicated problem than those in the north through the necessity of guarding against the danger of yellow fever. This is especially the case on the Gulf of Mexico, but with conditions such as they are on the Columbia and the cold climate and few mosquitoes, there is no need for working against this particular disease. When fumigating the holds of vessels many insects, such as roaches meet their death.

Uncle Sam has a big investment in the Columbia river quarantine station which is justified in its ability to make certain that incoming aliens are clean and fit to mingle with healthy humans and that danger of transferring disease from foreign countries is eliminated. During the last two years the crews at the quarantine station have had few idle spells, all this time there being a steady flow of incoming and outgoing traffic. The government is ever on the watch and shipping men have been educated to realize the advantage of extreme vigilance where the health of the nation is concerned.

NOTED WOMAN PHYSICIAN REFUSES TO DOLL ALL UP

More Interest Shown in Prolonging and Preserving Life Than in Using Inconsequential Externals.

FOR 20 years Miss Ida M. Sandborn of Chicago hasn't looked in a mirror to comb her hair or powder her nose or put on her hat.

for 20 years Dr. Sandborn has not consulted the looking-glass even when buying millinery or trying on a new gown.

Still, this somewhat remarkable woman is always well dressed and of a pleasing appearance. Her black serge skirts are never shiny and her sensible black walking shoes are always neat and square at the heels.

She is one of Chicago's best-known physicians and she says she hasn't time for any reflections, facial or otherwise.

Dr. Sandborn has not taken a vow against seeing her face or buying clothes or anything of the kind. It is a simple, even if resolute, determination to attend to business and that only.

Twenty years ago Dr. Sandborn came to the conclusion that she would rather be a successful scientist and physician than to be a really dressy woman. She was more interested in prolonging and preserving life than in spending hers on inconsequential externals.

"I have read somewhere or heard it said," remarked Dr. Sandborn, "that a good many business and professional women spend more time powdering their noses and arranging their hair, and shopping, than they do on their work. That they are busier being women than in being business people. But I am sure this isn't often true. Where your biggest interest is, there you will put your attention.

"Why do women spend so much time over dress—and in front of mirrors? Is it to get the attention of men or to impress women? Is it a sense of romance that accounts for French hats and trick shoes? I think the answer is that most women dress for their own satisfaction, more than to please or astonish either men or other women. Otherwise you cannot account for the lacey intimate things they spend so much money on and that only they are conscious of. It would be just as sensible for a woman to make eating or sleeping a life aim as to let dressing dominate her days. Dressing up is not my idea of a career."

The real story back of Dr. Sandborn and her devotion to work is something she does not often talk about.

There was a man, of course—very, very many years ago. But he died and all of the trousseau things were given away, and Miss Sandborn—she was a cartoonist then—decided to go into medicine.

And then while she was still such a very young physician that she was too shy to hang out her shingle before her office, her father came to the point of death. She decided that she would devote every energy to saving his life—to studying and analyzing and finding a cure for diabetes that would save his life.

She says she found it—and after having such a big tussle with death, could not be interested much in clothes.

Miss Sandborn's concentrated attention to her work has borne fruit. The news of the remedy that she sat up nights discovering for her father went abroad, and now she is head of a great laboratory for the treatment of diabetes and kindred diseases.

"But my clothes do not just happen," admits Miss Sandborn. "There is a milliner who sends me hats and a tailor who sends a new skirt every so often, and a shoemaker who takes care of my shoes. Changes in style never bother me and that makes it unnecessary to be fitted. When anything gets shabby, there's a new one to take its place."

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Regulations Rigidly Enforced.

A copy of the American quarantine regulations is given to each master and he must religiously live up to all of its provisions. A vessel must be moored a certain distance away from the dock and in addition to the rat fenders on the hawsers, nets and other guards must be maintained and gang planks and boarding planks watched to prevent the rodent passenger from getting ashore. In cases where cargo might be injured through fumigation provisional pratique provides for its discharge upon taking all possible precautions to prevent any violation of quarantine regulations. On a vessel's arrival in Portland preparations for fumigation have already been made and it proceeds as rapidly as possible so as to afford no delay. Upon completion of the job a certificate is given the master and he is allowed to proceed with the regular course of his business.

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During war times, with the cessation of foreign traffic, the public health service spent much money in maintaining the Columbia river station, which performed little inspection work. The wisdom of this course has been amply justified during the last two years, as the officials have been forced to work at top speed to handle the great increase in shipping.

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